

Kalamazoo Public Library
OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PUBLIC MEETING
Date: September 22, 2014
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Location: Central Library Board Room

TRUSTEE ROLL CALL:

Present: Robert Brown, Bruce Caple, Lisa Godfrey, and James Vander Roest

Absent: Fenner Brown, Cheryl TenBrink, and Valerie Wright

CALL TO ORDER:

Acting President Caple called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

The agenda was approved. Board President C. TenBrink was absent from the meeting and had appointed B. Caple as Acting President.

I. RECOGNITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, COMMUNICATIONS
None.

II. PERSONS REQUESTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD
No one addressed the Board.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR
A. Minutes of the Meeting of August 25, 2014
B. Personnel Items

The Minutes of the meeting of August 25, 2014 and the personnel items were accepted.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS
A. Financial Reports for the Month Ending July 31, 2014

Recommendation: Director Rohrbaugh recommended the Board accept the Financial Reports for the month ending August 31, 2014.

MOTION: B. CAPLE MOVED AND L. GODFREY SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE MONTH ENDING AUGUST 31, 2014.

MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

V. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDATIONS:
No recommendations.

REPORTS:*A. Summer Reading Games Wrap-Up – Andrea Vernola and Michael Cockrell*

Report: Director Rohrbaugh introduced A. Vernola and M. Cockrell. M. Cockrell began by stating participation and prize-claiming rates were up across the board. M. Cockrell also commented there was a very noticeable increase in parents signing up for the Summer Reading Games at the desk in the Children's room. He attributed this to parents signing themselves, their spouses, and their children up at the same time, saying it's clear that parents are demonstrating a desire to model good reading behavior for their children. A. Vernola agreed with this assessment, saying the numbers indicated good jumps in participation, and pointed out little had changed in terms of the ways in which prizes were assigned to each game. She stated there were prizes for each age group every fifteen days after the sixty-day mark and bonus activities for each age group that could earn the patron an additional prize: the Chico bags. She stated this year, there were 490 people who claimed that prize, which was much more than in 2013, but was not as many as they had initially hoped.

A. Vernola elaborated on the internal logistics of the 2014 Summer Reading Games, saying all of the prize organization was very similar to last year, which made it easier to focus on staff efficiencies and ways in which we could get the prizes out to all KPL locations in a way that made the most sense. She stated that there were fewer questions and concerns from staff regarding the handling, delivering, and distribution of prizes. M. Cockrell agreed with this assessment and pointed out when fewer large changes are made to the games from year to year, it results in smoother execution overall. Regarding the books given away as prizes this year, A. Vernola stated children ages four through thirteen could earn three books and a final prize which varied depending on age group.

In regards to goals for the 2015 Summer Reading Games, A. Vernola began by drawing attention to the desire to reduce the adult prize budget in order to allow for additional growth of the games. This would be accomplished by retaining the largest prize for the adults, but dropping some of the other prizes and using that money to purchase books to give as prizes for the younger age groups. A. Vernola reiterated that the focus for Summer Reading Games should be school-aged children and commented that the participation rates had been shared with Kalamazoo Public Schools, but no response had been given just yet. She continued by drawing attention to another goal for 2015: continuing to make Summer Reading Games as simple as possible for KPL staff members. M. Cockrell commented that it has been working so far, and A. Vernola stated that the final goal for next year is to change the name of the event to 'Summer Reading Challenge'.

Discussion: B. Caple indicated that perhaps the window clings given as prizes this year were too large. M. Cockrell stated the size of the clings was a known issue and they had already been reduced from their original size.

J. Vander Roest asked whether it was still planned to refer to the 'prizes' as 'rewards' in the future. A. Vernola responded saying this was still being discussed regularly, and much research has been conducted on whether or not it makes sense to reward children for reading by providing prizes, as it implies that reading is not its own reward. We have circumvented this logic by providing books as prizes. L. Godfrey agreed this practice constituted a proper stance on that issue.

B. Caple asked who won the drawings for the five Kindle ebook readers. M. Cockrell said the names of the winners were not something that was being made public, stating privacy issues.

Disposition: Trustees thanked A. Vernola, M. Cockrell, and KPL staff for their hard work.

B. Friends of KPL Update – Sherry Ransford-Ramsdell

Report: Director Rohrbaugh introduced Sherry Ransford-Ramsdell and welcomed her to the meeting, noting Sherry has been a longtime member of the Friends of Kalamazoo Public Library and has been serving as President since the spring of 2014.

S. Ransford-Ramsdell began by stating the Friends currently have 175 members and this number is less than they would like. The Friends do some amazing things and while the KPL staff does things that the Friends cannot, the Friends do things that KPL staff cannot. The Summer Reading Program, support for employees, scholarships and grants. The Friends are now gold-level sponsors of the Great Grownup Spelling Bee. The Friends find all of these activities very rewarding. The most recent bag sale raised nearly \$2,000. More importantly, they are getting a huge number of books out into the community, and a wide variety of people take advantage of the Friends' prices and their services. Because of all of this, they have determined there is a need for additional volunteers and members. She asked for assistance in bringing this number up.

She continued by pointing out book donation rates had been strong all summer and that was comforting. Sales are up from last year by a good amount. There was concern over the winter when sales were down, but they rebounded in the last half of the fiscal year. The Friends began accepting charge cards during the last year and she believes this may have contributed to the boost in sales. The Friends participated in the WMU/DKI 'Click Downtown' event, the 'Where's Waldo' event through Bookbug, and the KPL 'Golden Ticket' program.

In regards to upcoming events, the annual Friends Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, September 24 2014 in the VanDeusen Room. S. Ransford-Ramsdell opened the discussion for questions.

Discussion: B. Caple said it sounds like the Friends have a lot of new energy and are taking a lot of new steps. S. Ransford-Ramsdell said it is actually a lot of 'old energy' but they are always taking new steps and doing whatever they can. She also noted that Director of the Friends, Carol Manstrom, recently broke her wrist and will be out for a short while, but the bookstore will remain open during regular hours.

B. Brown asked for clarification regarding the 175 current Friends members and how that compares historically. S. Ransford-Ramsdell said while 175 has been a good average for the last several years, the number used to be considerably higher.

B. Caple indicated he would love to see the Friends annual meeting held in the evening or on a weekend so that interested persons with daytime work schedules could more easily attend. S. Ransford-Ramsdell said many changes were being considered for the annual meeting including the elimination of the food typically served, library tours being given prior to the meeting, and having a volunteer appreciation component added to the meeting. Additionally, it has been

suggested that coupons be given to attendees who would then be able to browse the bookstore. The primary aims of this would be to make the meeting more exciting and less expensive.

Director Rohrbaugh explained the Friends typically give KPL approximately \$50,000 annually, and are the major underwriters for the Summer Reading Games program. They are also the ones who funded the millage campaign and made it possible for the library to not undertake fundraising efforts for the campaign itself. In previous years, this was not the case. There is between \$5,000 and \$6,000 left in the campaign fund and that is from the past two years. The fund will be closed and the remaining money will be returned to the Friends. L. Godfrey stated the contribution to the campaign effort was an extraordinary benefit.

Disposition: Trustees thanked S. Ransford-Ramsdell for her report.

C. *Booktoberfest – Kevin King*

Director Rohrbaugh indicated that K. King would be delivering the Booktoberfest report in place of Farrell Howe who was attending a seminar.

Report: K. King explained Booktoberfest would hopefully be an annual event. The idea originated within Innovation Team and went to the Programming Committee which formed a small taskforce to take on the planning. The members of this taskforce were K. King, M. Cockrell, Angela Fortin, Karen Trout, and F. Howe. A program agenda was drafted, local breweries were contacted. The central theme is celebrating the brewery landscape of Kalamazoo alongside the Kalamazoo Public Library. Bell's, Arcadia, Tibb's, Bilbo's, Gonzo's, and Bright Eyes were all on board, as well as West Michigan Beer Tours and *The Michigan Beer Film* which will be shown at the Alamo Drafthouse. Programming began last week. Keith Howard gave a wonderful presentation on the history of breweries in Kalamazoo. Over fifty people attended. Additional programs include 'Home Brewing with Bell's Brewery', a screening of *The Michigan Beer Film*, 'Beer and Food Pairings with Gonzo's BiggDogg Brewery', 'Meet the Brewmasters with Arcadia Ales', and a Local Brewery Panel Discussion.

Additionally, there are two book discussions that will take place. The first is *Round Ireland with a Fridge* by Tony Hawks, which will take place at Bilbo's. The second is *The Yellow Birds* by Kevin Powers, to be held at Arcadia Ales.

Two local breweries have brewed special beers in honor of our program. Tibb's is brewing 'Overdue Brew' and Bilbo's is brewing 'Legend of Pumpkin Hollow'. Library patrons will receive \$1.00 off any purchase at Tibb's every Thursday by showing their library card. Patrons will receive \$1.00 off on 'Legend of Pumpkin Hollow' purchases at Bell's by showing their library card.

KPL has ordered limited edition pint glasses to be given away at each event along with coasters. West Michigan Beer Tours will also be giving discounted rates to patrons that show their library cards.

Discussion: B. Caple asked whether there were additional copies of Tony Hawks's book. K. King said KPL had ordered more copies and noted Amazon.com was running low on copies, perhaps because people were buying them for this event.

K. King reiterated that this has been an exciting program series to plan, and all of our partners were excited to be participating.

J. Vander Roest inquired whether there were non-alcoholic components to the programs. K King said there was no alcohol being served at any of the events taking place at KPL. J. Vander Roest stated he was not interested in beer but rather German food and felt others would agree. He encouraged K. King to consider this for next year. B. Caple indicated Gonzo's has great food and encouraged everyone to attend the 'Beer and Food Pairings' event.

Disposition: B. Caple thanked K. King for his report.

D. Booktoberfest – Kevin King

Report: Library Box is a new service that IT has begun to investigate. It is in the KPL Digital Action Plan. It is a small white box; a device which will allow us to disseminate digital information in hard to reach places. It essentially takes the place of a bulletin board, an information desk, or a box of handouts- things that are difficult to transport to events taking place within the community. The library box is incredibly small and can do this easily. It's a combination of a router, a USB drive, and software, which when combined, provides a small, mobile web-server. It delivers information which is stored on the USB drive.

Patrons can connect to the Library Box in much the same way they connect to a WiFi network using their mobile devices. Upon opening a web browser, it will take the patron to a pre-constructed webpage where the information stored upon the USB drive will be accessible to download. It does not require a local internet connection. It was created by a man named Jason Griffey, who is the head of IT for the University of Tennessee. His goal was to create a way to wirelessly provide digital information within areas with low or no internet connectivity- a way to deliver education.

Discussion: L. Godfrey asked if connection to the Library Box was dependent on cell phone service towers. K King said it was not. J. Vander Roest asked if it was akin to a WiFi hotspot. K. King said that it was, except it would not give connection to the internet, only to the data stored on the USB drive. L. Godfrey expressed concern that the places to which one might take a library box would not have the necessary devices to connect to the Library Box. J. Vander Roest agreed, but stated KPL staff would be aware of such disparities and tailor the program and supplies to compensate for this. B. Brown suggested KPL employees bring an iPad or other device in order to demonstrate the connection process to those attending the program. K King agreed and said the Library Box allows staff to bring *fewer* materials, as opposed to no materials at all.

The possibilities for program augmentation are numerous and include the sharing of internal documents for staff use, sharing free music, KPL concerts, videos of library events, as well as a lot of general utility for programs such as Reading Together. They could be placed around town for various KPL uses and cost approximately \$50.00 - \$60.00 each.

B. Brown asked what the wireless range on a Library Box would be. K King said it would be approximately the size of the Van Deusen Room. J. Vander Roest said it sounded interesting and encouraged K. King to keep the Trustees updated on the progress of the project. K King said IT staff had been able to reverse engineer the Library Boxes already purchased and felt confident in building their own models, which would save on costs. B. Caple said he could see great utility in Library Box for special events, especially given how pervasive cell phone usage has become in

recent years. B. Brown said the elimination of the need for an internet connection to the KPL website itself was impressive.

Disposition: The Trustees thanked K. King for his report.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. *Finance and Budget Committee* – No meeting to report, but there will be a meeting on October 8th.
- B. *Personnel Committee* – No meeting.
- C. *Fund Development and Allocations Committee* – Director Rohrbaugh said there was no meeting to report, but there may be a meeting this fall, which might be a good opportunity to review the performance of the endowment. L. Godfrey asked if that would be a meeting in which expenditures would be discussed. Director Rohrbaugh said that it was too early to tell, but she would work with Diane Schiller to determine if even in the event of no expenditure discussion a meeting should still be called in order to meet with the financial advisors.
- D. *Director's Building Advisory Committee* – No meeting.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. *Director's Report*

Report: Director Rohrbaugh said one item in particular was worth discussing even if all the details were not present, given the absence of D. Schiller. There is a TIF revision being introduced into the House. TIF stands for Tax Increment Financing and has been a big issue in the library field. That is, part of our library millage goes to support downtown through the TIF capture. Most of what has been said so far has come through the DDA, not through MLA. It is not known at this point if it has been introduced just yet or not, but has been characterized as 'devastating to DDAs'.

The main thrust of this threat is that under the proposed revision, the money from a TIF capture could not be used for programs, operations, or public safety- only for basic capital improvements such as sidewalks and streetlight. Our DDA has been using it for a programs, operations, and public safety in addition to basic capital improvements. It appears as though this may cause DDAs to fold and then reconstitute themselves, except for those with outstanding bonds that need to be paid off on the expectation that TIF capture would continue. It is unclear at this point whether or not entities such as KPL would be able to opt out of this process. As it stands, it is a *major* topic of conversation within DDAs both local and across the state.

Director Rohrbaugh continued by highlighting a number of items on the report, the first being Library Card Signup Month, which is running parallel to the events K. King mentioned in the Booktoberfest report. There is a list on our website of local restaurants and businesses offering discounts during Library Card Signup Month. Next is 1,2,3 Play w/Me which launched at Oshtemo and Central Library. Additionally, the first of the annual First Grade Visits takes place tomorrow at Powell. The first one is usually a particularly big deal; there are generally people from KPS to help launch the program. There are also some changes to the Overdrive model we have been using.

Discussion: L. Godfrey said if the local DDA did have to be reconstituted, it may be likely that the conversation regarding KPL's ability to opt out of the TIF capture would be revisited. Director Rohrbaugh said it would be very difficult for the Kalamazoo DDA to fold and reconstitute due to the large amount of debt it has accrued from the construction of parking ramps in recent years. L. Godfrey said it sounded as if, moving forward, were the revision accepted, the local DDA would only be able to use TIF capture funds to pay for capital improvements and to pay off their debt.

L. Godfrey raised a question concerning automatic checkout feature within Overdrive. Director Rohrbaugh and M. Cockrell said that it allows a hold within overdrive to immediately be checked out and delivered to the patron upon availability.

J. Vander Roest asked about the DKI teambuilding exercise engaged in by MTeam earlier in the month. Director Rohrbaugh explained the exercise was based on Myers Briggs personality types. The results were encouraging and indicative of a very functional MTeam.

Disposition: Trustees thanked Director Rohrbaugh for her report.

VIII. PERSONS REQUESTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

No one addressed the Board.

IX. COMMENTS BY TRUSTEES

- B. Brown thanked KPL for the copy of The Living Great Lakes by Jerry Dennis, and the opportunity to participate in the Great Grownup Spelling Bee.
- J. Vander Roest expressed thanks for his copy of Dennis's book as well. He also said during a recent discussion regarding the Summer Reading Games, he was asked by an eleven-year-old why adults don't receive books as prizes, to which he responded the priority is to get books into the hands of children. This pleased the young patron.
- B. Caple said he had a discussion with a young family who described a KPS program in which books were mailed directly to students. The family was very impressed by the quality of these books. He also related his continuing appreciation for the quality of work done by the KPL staff.

X. ADJOURNEMENT

Hearing no objection, acting President Caple adjourned the meeting at 5:01 P.M.

X_____
Robert Brown
Secretary

[Return to Agenda](#)